

## DIALOGUE

Between Two Country-men, the one a CHRISTIAN,  
and the other a QUAKER ; Concerning

## Womens Preaching.

Wherein is shown, That Women's Preaching is contrary  
to the Scriptures, and to be accounted a Delusion of  
the Devil. 26. Oct. 1699.

## I JOHN IV. I.

Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits, whether they are of God ; because many False Prophets are gone out into the World.

Christian. HOW dost thou do, Neighbour ?  
Quaker. Pretty well, through Mercy.

Chr. Neighbour, methinks by your dress, thou hast been abroad to day.

Qua. Yea, so I have ; I have been at a Meeting of Friends.

Chr. Pray, who spake thereto Day ?

Qua. Two Women, one after another.

Chr. What ! Women ? Do the Quakers hold it lawful for Women to Preach in their Assemblies ?

Qua. Yea ; for I am told, that when God moveth by His Spirit in Women, it is no way unlawful for her to Preach in the Assemblies of God's People. [See the Book called, An Apology for the true Christian Divinity, as the same is held forth, and Preached by the People called (in scorn) Quakers. Written by R. Barc. Printed Anno. Dom. 1678. Page 220.]

Chr. Indeed, I have often heard of Womens Preaching among the Quakers, but never was so well satisfied of the truth of it as I am now. But Neighbour, I must tell thee, that I have read in the Scriptures, that Women are forbidden to Preach in the Church.

Qua. In what place of Scripture, I Pray ?

Chr. In 1 Cor. 14. 34. 35. where St. Paul says thus, Let your Women keep silence in the Churches ; for it is not permitted unto them to speak : but they are commanded to be under Obedience : And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their Husbands at Home ; for it is a shame for Women to speak in the Church. And again, 1 Tim. 2. 11. 12. Let the Woman learn in Silence, with all Subjection : But I suffer not a Woman to Teach, nor to usurp Authority over the Man ; but to be in Silence. Which two places are so plain against Womens Speaking in the Church, that I judge it altogether unlawful for them to take upon them that Sacred Office.

Qua. But Neighbour, thou dost mistake Paul's meaning in the first place thou dost mention ; for Paul's design there ( R. B's Apol. p. 220. ) is only to prove the inconsiderate and talkative Women among the Corinthians, who troubled the Church of Christ with their unprofitable Questions ; and not universally and perpetually to forbid Womens Speaking in the Church. ( G. W's Anecdote. p. 89. )

Chr. Let it be granted, that what thou say'st was St. Paul's design in that place, yet there is enough may be collected from it, as may convince any one of the unlawfulness of Womens Preaching in the Church : For if it was not lawful for Women to Speak in the Church, nor so much as to ask a Question for their better Instruction, much less lawful is it for them to

Teach and Instruct others in the Church. I am sure that place aforesaid in Timothy, ( 1 Tim. 2. 11. 12. ) is as directly contrary to your Womens Preaching in the Church, as Light is to Darknels ; for in these words the Apostle does plainly intimate to us, that to Speak in a Church-Assembly by way of Teaching and Instructing others, is an Act of Superiority : And because Preaching in the Church is such an Act, therefore Women ought not to take it upon them ; because that Sex was to be in Subjection.

Qua. But Neighbour, Paul himself, in the same Epistle to the Corinthians, ( R. B's Apol. p. 220. ) giveth Rules how Women should behave themselves in their Publick Preaching and Praying : which would be altogether needless, were it not lawful for them to Preach, that they might have an Opportunity to follow his Directions. The place of Scripture is in 1 Cor. 11. 5. Every Woman Praying and Prophecying with her Head uncovered, dishonoureth her Head : Where it is plain enough, that it is lawful for Women to Preach.

Chr. 'Tis certain, that Prophecying was a thing attributed to Women, and therefore undoubtedly some such thing as they were capable of : But that Women may Preach can no ways be proved from that place.

For as I remember, a Friend of mine, who was a very learned, honest, and a good Man, in a discourse upon that Text, gave another meaning of the word Prophecying mentioned there ; and I took especial Notice of it, because it was a place wrested by the Quakers to prove Womens Preaching from. ( G. W's Ant. p. 89. ) And to the best of my Remembrance, he took this method to make me understand the meaning of it.

To Prophecy ( says he ) is a large word, and hath divers Significations.

First, It signifies to foretell things to come, as that which, in those Primitive times, both Men and Women did, by the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon them ; according to that of the Prophet Joel, applied by St. Peter, to the sending of the Holy Ghost at the first Promulgation of the Gospel. Joel 2. 28. 29. Acts 2. 17. 18. I will pour out my Spirit upon all Flesh, and your Sons and your Daughters shall Prophecy. ( i. e. ) shall foretell things to come. And such Prophetesses as these, were those four Daughters of Philip the Evangelist, whereof we read, Acts 21. 9.

Secondly, It signifies to Interpret or Expound Scripture, for the Instruction and Edification of the Hearers. Thus the Apostle St. Paul useth it. 1 Cor. 14. Where he discourseth largely of spiritual Gifts ; and before all, prefers that of Prophecy ; because, He that Prophesieth ( saith he, v. 3. ) speaketh unto Men to Edification, and Exhortation, and Comfort.

Thirdly, It signifies Singing and Praising God, Forming

Forming of Divine Hymns, and Singing them to God. Thus it is used, 1 Sam. 10. 5. 6. *Thou shalt meet a Company of Prophets coming down from the high Place with a Psalter, and a Tabret, and a Pipe, and a Harp, before them, and they shall Prophesy.* (i. e.) they shall Sing, as the Chaldee Paraphrase reads. And the Spirit of the Lord shall come upon thee, and thou shalt Prophesy: (where the Chaldee Paraphrase hath, And thou shalt Braile with them.) And thus it is used, 1 Chron. chap. 24. three times, in the three first verses, one after another; where the Instruments there mentioned, put it out of all doubt, that by Prophesying is there meant, Praising God with Spiritual Songs and Melody.

There are several other Acceptations of the word Prophesying; but these three are sufficient to explain the words in Controversie.

Now the word Prophesying in the words before us (says he) is to be taken in the last of these Significations, and is to be rendered thus, *Every Woman Praying or Prophesying* (i. e. Singing Psalms) *having her Head covered, dishonoureth her Head.* And that the word, Prophesying ought to be taken in this Sense, viz. for Praising God, rather than for Preaching in a Sacred Assembly, is to me clear and evident enough; for Praying to, and Praising God, being part of the Christian Liturgy, it is in no ways disagreeable to Scripture or Reason, that Women should perform such Service in the Assemblies of God's People.

This place then, which thou dost mention, is not sufficient to prove *Womens Preaching* from: And if thou hast no other, it is to be looked upon as Pride and Arrogancy, and Presumption in them, to take upon them that Office which they have no Authority to Execute.

*Qua.* It is plain and perspicuous, (*R. B's Apol.* p. 220.) that Women have *Prophesied and Preached* in the Church, else had that saying of *Isa* (*Isa* 2. 28. 29.) been badly applied by *Peter*, (*Acts* 2. 17.) And it is written, *Acts* 21. 9. that *Philip* had four Daughters, that *Prophesied*.

*Chr.* To true, and did *Peter* use by the Mouth of the Prophet *Isa*, the pouring out his Spirit upon us Flesh, and that their Sons and their Daughters should Prophesy. And this famous Prophecy of *Isa* was fulfilled upon the day when the Jewish Pentecost was Celebrated; when as the Holy Ghost descended in the shape of Cloven-tongues, (*Acts* 2. 3.) like as of Fire, and sat upon each of *Apostles*' Head. And 'tis true also, that about that time Women *Prophesied*; (i. e.) foretold things to come, which was an extraordinary Gift of the Spirit, that *Philip*'s four Daughters had. But that the Women *Preached* in the Church in those days, still remains to be proved; for the word *Prophesying* in both those Places, signifies fore-telling things to come, and not *Preaching* in a Congregation, as the best Expositors, both Ancient and Modern, do agree.

Besides, That Prophecy of *Isa* was long since accomplished and fulfilled, (the last days to which it refers, being the days immediately preceding the Destruction of the Jewish Polity, their City and Temple) and therefore belongs no way to our Sons and Daughters in these days of ours, and consequently no War-  
rant for *Womens Preaching* Now.

*Qua.* There were Deaconesses as well as Deacons in the Primitive Christian Church; and *Paul* speaks of a Woman that Laboured with him in the work of the Gospel. (*G. W's Ant.* p. 90. & *R. B's Apol.* p. 200.)

*Chr.* 'Tis true, We read, (*Rom.* 16. 1.) of *Phoebe*, who was a Deaconess of the Church, and of *Priscilla*, who was St. *Paul*'s Fellow-labourer in Christ Jesus; and of *Trochima*, and *Tryphosa*, who Laboured in the Lord: But the Office of the Deaconesses in the Church (among other things) was to provide Necessaries for the *Apostles*, and not to *Preach* in the Church, that they, being free from those worldly cares, might be the more at leisure for *Preaching* only: And for this reason, they accompanied the *Apostles* in their Journeys, to *Preach* the Gospel, and furnished them with all things which they wanted; and from hence they are said to Labour in the Lord, and to Labour in Christ Jesus; and not from their *Preaching*, as your

L O N D O N, Printed

Quakers foolishly imagine.

And now I think I have sufficiently answered all that thou hast to say, from the Scriptures, for your *Womens Preaching* in your Assemblies: And from the whole that we have said, it is easy to collect that much, That there is no Authority from the Scriptures to ground your *Womens Preaching* upon, and that *Women* are universally and perpetually forbidden to *Speak* in the Church; and consequently that *Q. Womens Preaching* is unlawful.

But Neighbour, before we part, I must say something more concerning *Womens Preaching*. St. *Paul* says, *Rom.* 10. 15. *How shall they Preach except they be sent?* And it hath been the Doctrine of the Catholic Church, That it is not lawful for any one to take upon him the Office of Publick *Preaching*, before he be lawfully called and sent to execute the same. Pray tell me, how cometh a Woman to be lawfully called to be a Teacher or Preacher in the Church of Christ?

*Qua.* My answer, By the inward Power and Virtue of the Spirit of God: (*R. B's Apol.* p. 186.) So a Man comes to be a Minister of Christ; and no doubt, but so a Woman comes to be a Preacher also. When then God moveth by his Spirit in a Woman, or when she is divinely induced and inspired to *Preach* by the Holy Ghost, (*G. W's Ant.* p. 89.) as the *Apostles* were at the day of Pentecost, then it is lawful for her to *Preach* in the Assemblies of God's People.

*Chr.* Dost thou believe then, that your *Womens Preachers* are immediately Inspired by the Holy Ghost as the *Apostles* were, and that they speak by the dictates of the Spirit, as the Spirit gives them Utterance?

*Acts* 2. 4.

*Qua.* We hold that they are immediately Inspired, and that they speak with the same Spirit as the *Apostles* did.

*Chr.* When your *Preachers* can prove that they are sent from God by speaking in divers Languages, without learning of them at School, when they can work Miracles to prove their Mission from God, as the *Apostles* did, (as namely, cast out Devils, raise the Dead, make the Lame to Go, and the like, *Acts* 5. 26. *Acts* 14. 10. *Acts* 14. 18. *Acts* 19. 12. *Acts* 20. 10. *Acts* 28. 5.) then I will believe that they have lawful Authority, and are lawfully called to *Preach* the Gospel, and not till then. In the mean time give me leave to tell thee, that because *Womens Preaching* is contrary to the Scriptures, it is therefore to be accounted a Delusion of the Devil.

*Qua.* If thou canst prove that to be true, I will no more go to hear *Womens Preaching*.

*Chr.* I will prove the truth of it thus, *Robert Barcl.* in the second Proposition concerning the Scriptures says thus, We (Quakers) shall also be very willing to admit it as a positive certain Maxim, That whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, be accounted and reckoned a Delusion of the Devil.

Now from this Maxim I argue thus, whatsoever any do, pretending to the Spirit, which is contrary to the Scriptures, is to be accounted and reckoned a Delusion of the Devil.

But *Womens Preaching* is contrary to the Scriptures, (as I have before shewn unto thee) and they pretend to *Preach* by the Spirit, as thou thyself dost own and acknowledge.

Therefore *Womens Preaching* is to be reckoned and accounted a Delusion of the Devil.

*Qua.* Thou hast in some measure proved that *Womens Preaching* is unlawful and consequently a Delusion of the Devil. Therefore unless some Friends can give me better Satisfaction than they have hitherto done, about the Lawfulness of *Womens Preaching*, I shall look not only upon that, but upon their *Mens Preaching* too, (for they both stand upon the same Foundation) to be a Delusion likewise; and become a Protest-  
ante of that Church out of which I have heard there is no Salvation.

Fare thee Well.

1. John 2. 26. These things have I written unto you, concerning them that Seduce you.  
for the Author, 1699.